



HUNTSVILLE

Tommy Battle
Mayor

March 13, 2015

Honorable Madeline Hughes Haikala, Judge
United States District Court for
The Northern District of Alabama
Hugo L. Black United States Courthouse
1729 Fifth Ave. N., Room 319 Birmingham, Alabama 35203

Dear Judge Haikala,

My apologies for having to leave the courthouse Thursday before the end of public comment. It has been a long journey, and I wanted to follow up with you with some final thoughts.

On behalf of all of the citizens of Huntsville, we greatly appreciate the magnitude of the effort by the Huntsville City School Board and the U.S. Justice Department in coming together to make certain every child in Huntsville has equal opportunity for a high quality education. Equal education is a crucial element for our community's success.

We thank you, the Justice Department, and our School Board for the time and effort you have spent on the integrity of this plan. I think everyone realizes the gravity of the situation and the challenges and opportunities that will arise from this decision.

As Mayor, I pledge to you that our community will work diligently to ensure that the changes and opportunities outlined in the agreement are followed. The consent decree is right for our community. It will strengthen our city.

To that end, our community will emphasize our partnership role in working together to provide every child the equal opportunity for an enriched academic experience. This cannot be accomplished solely by the school system, the school board or its superintendent, or by city government. It will truly take an entire community, working in concert, to achieve our goals. Now is the time for action, to roll up our sleeves, and to get to work to help our schools become the model of high quality and equal opportunity for all.

It is my sincere hope that you will expedite a decision on this important matter. The time to act is now. Our community is ready to move forward.

Best regards,

Tommy Battle
Mayor

Star of Alabama